

REMARKS

The Office Action dated July 30, 2007, has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Claims 1 and 4-25 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1 and 11 are independent claims. Claims 1 and 11-13 have been amended, and claims 22-25 have been added, to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. No new matter has been added. Support for the amendments may found, for example, at least at page 14, lines 1-14 (steps 5-7); page 15, line 10, to page 16, line 4; and page 12, line 22, to page 13, line 3. Claims 1 and 4-25 are respectfully submitted for consideration.

Claims 1, 4-12, and 14-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0104702 of Nakadai et al. ("Nakadai"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, because Nakadai is not proper prior art.

Nakadai is the U.S. Publication of International Application No. PCT/JP02/02204, which was filed March 8, 2002, and published on June 3, 2004. Nakadai's international publication, however, was not in English. Accordingly, Nakadai does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) against any application, since an international application filed after November 29, 2000, only qualifies as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) if it both designates the United States and was published in English.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1, 4-12, and 14-21 be withdrawn.

Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakadai in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,584,375 of Bancroft et al. ("Bancroft"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, because Nakadai is not proper prior art, as proven above. Timely withdrawal of the rejection is accordingly requested.

Applicants note for the Examiner's convenience that the following applications are apparently related to Nakadai, and were published before Nakadai, specifically:

- JP2002264051, published September 18, 2002;
- JP2002264052, published September 18, 2002;
- JP2002264053, published September 18, 2002; and
- WO02072317, published September 19, 2002.

Likewise, for the Examiner's convenience and to expedite prosecution, some discussion of the differences between Nakadai and the presently claimed invention are discussed below.

For example, independent claims 1 and 11 are distinguishable over the disclosure of Nakadai itself because claim 1 recites, "means for traveling autonomously" and claim 11 recites "a traveling robot adapted to travel autonomously," features that Nakadai's robot lacks.

The Office Action took the position that such features are disclosed by elements 11, 14, and 16 of Nakadai's Figures 1 and 2. This position is incorrect. Element 11 is a base, that supports a body portion 12. The base can be, as described at paragraph [0114], either disposed fixed in position or arranged operable as a foot of the robot.

Alternatively, the base may be mounted on a movable carriage or the like. Element 14 is sound insulating cladding, and elements 16 are microphones attached to a head portion 13 of Nakadai's robot.

Accordingly, Nakadai's robot, as described in Nakadai's description is enabled for angular tracking of targets, not for autonomous travel. Indeed, the idea of Nakadai's robot traveling autonomously appears to be entirely absent from Nakadai's disclosure, and there does not appear to be any reason (such as teaching, motivation, or suggestion) that one of ordinary skill in the art would incorporate such a feature into Nakadai.

Furthermore, the presently pending claims have been amended to recite, "wherein the recognition means detects the guest as a moving object and when it is determined that the guest has approached to a prescribed distance, detects a face of the guest to identify the guest by using the detected face," (claims 1 and 11). Such a feature is also not to be found in Nakadai, and there is no reason (such as teaching, motivation, or suggestion) that one of ordinary skill in the art would incorporate such a feature into Nakadai.

As previously noted in the response filed May 7, 2007, such features can provide critical and unobvious advantages over the prior art of record. For example, certain embodiments of the present invention provide a robot that is capable of identifying a guest and taking actions appropriate to the identified guest. For this purpose, the robot can be provided with a recognition means and management database means. In short and for example, the robot can recognize the guest from the guest's face, and can act according to an appointment set up for this particular person. Humans are known to be pleased or otherwise excited when they are recognized by a stranger. Certain embodiments of the present invention advantageously allow a robot to recognize a guest

and take an appropriate action. This can provide a highly pleasing impact on the guest in addition to accomplishing a designated task, such as, for example, conducting the guest to a designated room.

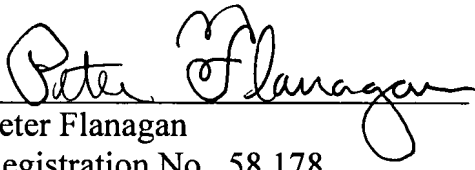
Thus, one valuable feature of certain embodiments of the present invention is that the robot is capable of identifying a guest and taking actions appropriate to the identified guest. The above-identified newly added features to the claims can allow the robot to obtain an appropriate size and direction of a face of a guest and this can significantly contribute to identifying the face of the guest with a high degree both of accuracy and precision. These critical and non-obvious advantages provide secondary consideration of non-obviousness that would be sufficient to rebut a *prima facie* case of obviousness, even if such a case could be made.

Thus, for the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that the presently pending claims recite subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited art. The primary cited reference, additionally, is not proper prior art. Accordingly, the amendments to the claims presented above are in no way necessary to overcome the cited art, although distinctions between the claims (as amended) and the cited art has been provided for the Examiner's convenience. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that all of claims 1 and 4-25 be allowed, and that this application be passed to issuance.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, Applicants' undersigned representative at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,


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Enclosures: Petition for Extension of Time
Additional Claims Transmittal
Check Nos. 017574 & 017616